

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 NEA-06 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 SSO-00

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O R 311526Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2273

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 3110

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP (HAMILTON, LEE)

SUBJECT: CODEL HAMILTON

REF: A. STATE 281900; B. DAMASCUS 3066; C. DAMASCUS 3088

1. CODEL CONTROL OFFICER, REF B, HAND-CARRIED NOTE RE CODEL HAMILTON VISIT TO FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DIRECTOR FOR AMERICAN AFFAIRS AMBASSADOR SHOUI SUNDAY MORNING, DEC 29, AND FOLLOWED UP WITH MEETING DEC 30 WITH MINISTRY'S PROTOCOL OFFICER. BOTH SYRIAN OFFICIALS ENTHUSIASTIC RE VISIT AND KNOWLEDGE OF ARE AT THAT CODEL BRINGS WITH IT. BOTH OFFICIALS CONFIRMED FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS ALREADY REQUESTED APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT ASAD FOR CODEL, BUT CAUTIONED PRESIDENT MAY BE IN LEBANON SUNDAY, JANUARY 5 FOR MEETING WITH LEBANESE PRESIDENT. FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM DEFINITELY WILL BE IN CAIRO DURING CODEL VISIT.

2. SCHEDULE WE ARE THEREFORE WORKING ON IS AS FOLLOWS:

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 1900 ETA FROM CAIRO VIA MILITARY AIRCRAFT (IN REF C WE AGAIN REQUESTED FLIGHT CLEARANCE INFO AND CREW HOTEL REQUIREMENTS AND HAVE NOT RPT NOT RECEIVED ASCMED
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NAPLES 310630Z DEC 74 NOTED IN STATE 283771); CONTROL OFFICER

WRIGHT WILL MEET, ASSISTED BY GSO GARY LEE WHO WELL-EXPERIENCED IN CREW AND AIRCRAFT ARRANGEMENTS. CODEL PROCEEDS TO AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE WHERE CODEL WILL STAY (MR. VAN DUSEN INVITED TO STAY WITH CONTROL OFFICER ROD WRIGHT), ARRIVING THERE AT APPROXIMATELY 1945.

2000 HRS - AMBASSADOR AND EMBOFFS BRIEFING OF CODEL AT RESIDENCE, FOLLOWED BY SMALL STAG DINNER OF SAME GROUP. WE ARE NOT YET INVITING SYRIANS TO THIS FUNCTION AS SATURDAY EVENING MAY BE ONLY TIME PRESIDENT ASAD CAN MEET CODEL AND GIVEN ASAD'S TIGHT SCHEDULE, EVENING MAY BE INTERRUPTED BY SUMMONS FROM PALACE WITH LITTLE NOTICE. WE ARE WORKING TO PIN DOWN TIME AND, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, WILL INCLUDE SYRIANS OF INTEREST TO CODEL AT DINNER IF INTERRUPTION BY PRESIDENT IS UNLIKELY. (AS GENERAL COMMENT ON INDIVIDUALS CODEL WOULD LIKE TO MEET, PARA 11, REF A, WE WOULD HOPE NEA/ARN HAS BRIEFED CODEL THAT NO NON-OFFICIAL AMERICANS, BUSINESSMEN, ETC., ARE YET WORKING IN SYRIA, ALTHOUGH SEVERAL NEW CONTRACTS WITH US FIRMS WILL BRING SOME IN FUTURE. ALSO, THERE IS ONLY ONE BRANCH OF AN AMERICAN COMPANY NOW IN SYRIA (NATIONAL CASH REGISTER) HEADED BY A SYRIAN FOR PAST 25 YEARS; OTHER SYRIAN BUSINESSMEN DEALING WITH US FIRMS ARE ON AGENT OR CIMMISSION BASIS RATHER THAN FULL-FLEDGED REPRESENTATIVES AS CODEL NO DOUBT WILL MEET AT OTHER STOPS.)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 0730, AFTER BREAKFAST AT RESIDENCE, CODEL, ACCOMPANIED BY EMBOFFS DEPARTS FOR QUNAYTARA.

0830-0930: VISIT QUNAYTARA AREA WITH SARG MILITARY ESCORT/GUIDE.

1030: RETURN TO DAMASCUS FOR APPOINTMENTS WITH MINISTER OF INFORMATION AHMAD ISKANDAR AHMAD, WHO IS LIEVLIEST EXPONENT OF SYRIAN POLITICO/MILITARY VIEW OF WORLD, MINISTER OF ECONOMY AND FOREIGN TRADE (AND FORMER PLANNING MINISTER) DR. MUHAMMAD IMADI (NYU PH.D IN ECONOMICS) WHO IS ONE OF MAIN GUIDING FORCES OF LIBERALIZATION OF SYRIAN ECONOMY AS DIRECTED BY PRESIDENT ASAD OVER LAST FOUR YEARS, AND SHORT COURTESY CALL ON SPEAKER OF PEOPLES' ASSEMBLY MUHAMMAD ALI AL-HALABI.
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1400: SMALL STAG LUNCHEON HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR TO WHICH WE WILL INVITE RISING YOUNG, ENGLISH-SPEAKING PROFESSIONALS.

1600: DEPARTURE PREPARATION AND LEAVE RESIDENCE FOR DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

1700: DEPARTURE BY MILITARY AIRCRAFT, ARRIVING AMMAN

1730 (PER AMMAN 7696).

3. WEATHER AND DRESS: ARRIVAL WEATHER WILL BE AROUND 58 DEGREES F., MID-DAY AROUND 65 F. QUNAYTARA AT 0830, JAN 5 WILL BE ABOUT 48F. BUSINESS SUIT APPROPRIATE FOR APPOINTMENTS AND LUNCHEON/DINNER; RECOMMEND HEAVY JACKET OR COAT FOR QUNAYTRA, OR HEAVY SWEATER UNDER JACKET. WEATHER SO FAR DRY, BUT RAINS, WHICH ARE LATE, COULD COME DURING VISIT.
MURPHY

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